



# The Egret

*the Newsletter of the Essex Count Field Naturalists' Club*

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## Carolina Woods

by Ruth Junge

The dedication of Carolina Woods (Heinz Bush) was celebrated Tuesday, June 15, 2003 at 6:30 p.m. The initial development of the former Heinz Woodlot and the community CN Rail pathway is now substantially complete.

Though heavy rain fell between 4:00 p.m. and 5:30 p.m., the rest of the evening was clear and pleasant and very conducive to a walk in the woods.

Some thirty people were present at the dedication. Mayor Wilkinson briefly outlined the town's involvement in the project. Jerry Pickard M.P. spoke about the loss of habitat and his government's interest in environmental issues. He reminded us of the make work project which saw six men work on the preparation of pathways in the bush.

Our own Tom Hurst gave the most meaningful review of the effort involved in acquiring the woodlot. Tom referred to the many people and agencies involved in the project.

Cam McKay, Manager of Operations for the Town of Leamington and the Master of Ceremonies, closed proceedings by inviting the Mayor and Mr. Pickard to unveil the sign which proclaims the new name and information about the "first environmental park," to quote Mr. McKay. He then invited those present to enter and enjoy the woods.

New additions to the woodlot are many very solid benches cemented in along the trails, inviting people to sit and enjoy. Peggy and Tom Hurst directed the town's Board of Works in the placement of signage for some of the species within the area.

It was most gratifying to watch people react with pleasure as they began to experience the trails.

It was a good evening and deeply satisfying to know that after so many years and so many hurdles, good people have managed, in a democratic and cooperative manner, to preserve for posterity a remnant of Carolinian forest in the heart of an urban setting.

Hats off to all of us! We did good!

## About the Club . . .

The Essex County Field Naturalists' Club was incorporated in March 1985. We are a registered charitable organization which promotes the appreciation and conservation of our natural heritage. ECFNC provides the community opportunities to be acquainted with and understand our natural world through identification, maintenance and preservation of natural areas of Essex County and surrounding regions. ECFNC is affiliated with the Federation of Ontario Naturalists (FON). *The Egret* is published quarterly. To receive information on the Essex County Field Naturalists' Club or to submit articles, letters, reports, etc., please write to :

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E.R.C.A. Liaison: Bruno Sfalcin  
Friends of Heinz Bush: Donna Sale  
Point Pelee Liaison: Mike Malone, Phil Roberts (alternate)  
Bluebird Committee Chairman: Don Bissonnette  
N.H.R.P. Committee Chairperson: Donna Sale  
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Speaker: E.C.F.N.C. Directors  
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Betty Learnmouth  
Annual Dinner: Heritage Committee  
N.H.R.P.: Dave Kraus, Donna Sale, Gerry Waldron, Linda  
Kennette, Teresa Austrin, Patricia Rhoads, Peggy Hurst  
Heritage: Mary Celestino, Betty Learnmouth, Margaret  
Jennings, Muriel Kassimatis, Jim McAllister, Patricia Rhoads,  
Gerry Waldron, Peg Wilkinson, Dave Kraus, JoAnn Grondin

## Wilfred Botham Biography Presented at the *Spring Song* Celebration

In the past two years the Baillie Birdathon has been held in May on Pelee Island. A celebration called *Spring Song* is held at the end of the 24 hour search and the person or group with the largest number of bird species sighted during the time period is presented a trophy at the evening dinner. This year it was decided to name the trophy, which is actually a cup, *The Botham Cup*. It is named in honour of Wilfred Botham, 1908 – 1989, who was an amateur naturalist and botanist from Essex County. His daughter, Lynn Imeson, was asked to give a synopsis of his life before the trophy was presented. The following is that tribute which was given by Lynn on the evening of May 10, 2003 at the Pelee Island Winery.

On April 9<sup>th</sup>, 1908, Wilfred Botham was born in a small cottage on Pelee Island, in the woods next to Vin Villa, and a stone's throw from Hulda's Rock. His parents, recent immigrants from England, promptly moved to Manitoba in hopes of making a decent living there farming. It was an extremely rough life and they and their three additional children returned to Pelee Island in 1925 when my father was seventeen. He stayed behind a short time to write his high school entrance exams. He was successful in the exams but never pursued a formal education past Grade 8. Instead, on returning to Pelee Island, he worked and lived with various farmers on the Island, including George Pierce and his son Cloice. Later he live with Cloice and his wife Muriel Pierce. Muriel is in the audience tonight. (Note from Lynn: Muriel is 92 years old and a delight to talk with).

In 1938 he and his parents bought a farm in Gosfield North in Essex County, where he worked and resided until his death in 1989. In 1942 he married my Mom, an artistic and extremely literate lady from Wisconsin. They had been pen pals, decided to meet in person in Fort William, Ontario, spent two days becoming acquainted and decided to get married on the spot! Besides farming he spent his entire life working in canning factories, tobacco factories, inspecting tomatoes and as a high school custodian. He crammed in his many other interests during his off hours and filled many type written binders with events of his life from the time he was seventeen.

Growing up in that household provided me with a rich education in many subjects: poetry, astronomy, plants, birds, frogs, toads, insects, fungus, mosses, orchids, languages, literature, art, music. He had collections of insects, shells, postage stamps and coins.

There were seldom mundane conversations in our household and I considered this normal. My father spent every free waking hour studying and explaining. One of my earliest recollections is tagging along with my father in a cold October or November cornfield as he husked our corn and recited poetry while a 1950 era airplane droned overhead. Other times he placed me in a special seat under the steering wheel of our large lug-wheel tractor while he worked the fields and talked about the latest book he was reading. At night he would show us the Little Dipper and Orion's Belt. Later memories are of countless hours spent at Point Pelee, traveling the trails looking for birds. Gradually, an interest in plants seemed to overtake the birding. Stacks of pressed ferns, mosses and various other plants eventually filled the area around his desk. In the late 1980s, a walk around the yard would take the better part of an hour as he identified for us, always with the Latin name, each new plant he had found and brought home to nurture.

His interest in nature was tweaked at an early age by reading *Two Little Savages* by Ernest Thompson Seton, an author who spent his entire life studying wildlife. In 1981 my father compiled a publication with the Essex Region Conservation Authority, *Plants of Essex County; a Preliminary List*, in which he quoted Seton as saying, "because I have known the torment of thirst, I would dig a well where others will drink."

My father stated in the same ERCA publication, "my interest in wildlife goes back as far as I can remember. I want to know how each animal and plant fits into the ecological system. I want to know how each cell in those plants and animals does its work; and I want to know how far away is the farthest star, how did it get there and how did we get here. I realize that the desire to know the answers to all the questions is an impossible dream."

The reading of the 1962 publication of Rachel Carson's book *Silent Spring* affected my father immensely. Carson, a nature writer and former marine biologist, documented how the insecticide DDT accumulated in the environment and harms mammals and birds. From that day forward, for many years, my dad quoted information from her book to anyone who was in earshot.

Many of the books in his library identify the owner as Wilfred Botham, "AmNat," Amateur Naturalist. His enthusiasm was infectious and he inspired others to learn. Even today and this evening I have had people tell me how he inspired them to learn more about plants and birds. He made himself a logo in the 60's showing the world, with the wording, "Birds, Words and Herds."

Plants he collected mainly from Pelee Island were preserved and sent in 1938 to the DAO, which is the Biosystematics Research Institute, Canada Department of Agriculture, Ottawa, which was formerly known as the Dominion Botanist. In December 1980 he sent a collection of 2,500 sheets to the National Museums of Natural Sciences Herbarium in Ottawa. After his death, his friend Mike Oldham took his remaining stacks of plants under his wing, categorized them and sent them off to the DAO and the Canadian Museum of Nature, also in Ottawa. This same friend acknowledges his contributions in Mary Celestino's book *Wildflowers of the Canadian Erie Islands*, and Mary herself devotes a paragraph to him.

During the last few years of his life he spent countless hours at the Interpretive Centre at Point Pelee helping the Park Naturalists identify plant material. The Botham Tree Trail which consists of Caorlinian trees and vines circles that Interpretive Centre. It was dedicated to him October 13, 1990, exactly one year to the day after his untimely death in a car accident. There is a bench dedicated to his memory on the Hillman Marsh Trail near Wheatley. After his death many people contributed to a fund to save 28 acres of tropical rainforest in the Amazon.

Also, in his later years he chose one year to compose a poem or pick one from his past writings for each living relative and send it to them on the occasion of their birthday.

In his 40's he stood on his head to amuse me. In his 60's he once stood on his head to amuse his grandchildren and to show them his agility. The memory still makes me smile.

He lived his entire 81 years without running water or a television set. He kept his pencilled notes on recycled envelopes, and was completely and totally organized with all his notes and binders.

When my father was 80, my husband tried, to no avail, to convince him not to chop down dead trees by himself far out in the fence rows.

We are so glad that he did live a long and extremely healthy life, and that he did have time after his duties were done, to explore many of his interests, and travel to many parts of the world in the pursuit of new plants and birds. These trips were logged in his memoirs and he sent them to the *Essex Free Press* and *The Leamington Post* so that others might share his experiences.

At my father's memorial in October 1989 we displayed a poem that he had composed at the age of 29. It describes perfectly his objective in life.

I hope longevity will be my friend;  
Continuous health until the end.  
I've many things to learn – so much to do;  
I'm hoping for each a rendezvous.

Wilfred Botham, 1937

*He was a humble man, and if he were here tonight, he would be at once a little embarrassed by all the attention, but at the same time delight in every moment. We thank you for this honour you have bestowed upon him.*

## Holiday Beach Conservation Area's Prothonotary Warblers

by Betty Learmouth

Fourteen ECFNC friends and members joined ECFNC President Phil Roberts on a sunny afternoon, June 1, 2003, for a walk at Holiday Beach Conservation Area (HBCA) to learn more about the resident Prothonotary Warblers. Holiday Beach and Big Creek Conservation Areas were designated an Important Bird Area on September 16, 2000 as these CAs are important bird migration sites and suitable breeding habitat for the provincially endangered Prothonotary Warbler which is at its most northerly location here in Canada's Carolinian Zone. Phil told us three pairs of Prothonotary Warblers are confirmed nesters at HBCA plus another pair that potentially will be confirmed, as well as a lone male, singing on territory in hopes of attracting a mate.

Prothonotary Warblers are a swamp/wetland species for which certain conditions must be present for this species to nest successfully. Since Prothonotary Warblers are cavity nesters that condition must be fulfilled, the nest cavity must be over water in the shade, and there must be an ample supply of moss to build a lining of this plant material in the nest cavity.

Before setting out to look at several Prothonotary Warbler territories, Phil showed us two Prothonotary Warbler nest boxes. The older design had a door that opened upward, potentially creating a crowded condition that might cause young to slip out when the box was monitored. The second and preferred box design has a oven-type door, opening downward and away from the nest box, a safer situation when the nest boxes are monitored. The interior of the wooden oven door box which was used by Prothonotary Warblers last season was stuffed with dry moss, while the cup of the nest was lined with fine grass. Prothonotary Warblers' moss lined nesting boxes appear to repel ants.

Phil told us that we should not expect to see female Prothonotary Warblers on their nests during egg laying. Females typically lay one white and brown egg per day, departing the nest until all eggs are laid. Once the entire clutch is laid, then incubation commences with the young hatching on the same date, then fledging together.

This nesting season the first male Prothonotary Warbler arrived at Holiday Beach Conservation Area on May 12, 2003. Typically males begin to build dummy nests in available cavities and nesting boxes upon their arrival on the nesting territory. At Holiday Beach CA the first female arrived between May 20 and May 22, 2003. Final choice of nesting box or cavity is made by the female, then the nest is completed with the cup lined with fine grasses. At Holiday Beach C.A. suitable cavities for Prothonotary Warblers are uncommon, creating much competition for available cavities, thus no dummy nests are built by male Holiday Beach Prothonotary Warblers.

Following Phil's introduction, we looked at the Prothonotary Warbler territory in the pond directly behind the Education Building while listening for the call of the resident male Prothonotary Warbler, a loud robust call in contrast to that of the Yellow Warbler. Luckily, both male and female Prothonotary Warblers were in the vicinity, moving about in overhead tree foliage, allowing good looks at both birds.

This site behind the Education Building was established last year but without success. The problem here was determined to be drainage of water away from the pond into the Trout Pond but now that water flow has been discontinued. Phil suggested that if the present water level is maintained, then this pair may have two egg clutches. Interestingly, the literature discussing Prothonotary Warbler nesting success at the northern edge of this species' range indicates that only one brood is to be expected. At Holiday Beach CA two clutches are the norm.

Following the meandering trail over a series of short boardwalks through this pair's territory, we emerged on the one-way roadway that leads to the parking lots beside the Trout Pond. Phil told us that this roadway will disappear over the next year, then a nearby dead tree next to the roadway viewed presently as a risk by park personnel will

become a valuable habitat tree. The culvert between the Education Building pond and the small pond beside the Trout Pond will be removed with the two ponds becoming linked. To provide the habitat that now exists around the two ponds would take some eighty years, thus the removal of this section of roadway makes sense, especially as another roadway is just steps away. Nesting boxes will be erected in the improved habitat, replacing two boxes in the pond adjacent to the Trout Pond which are poorly situated in full sunlight.

Leaving this potential Prothonotary Warbler habitat, we made our way northward on a nature trail that was improved several years ago. At the trail's north end we emerged to discover a sign indicating that we were not to go beyond this spot as the area was closed during nesting season. Phil invited us to step beyond the sign so that we could see the entire area that previously was a park access road but is now Prothonotary Warbler habitat. Contractor Jeff Shepley brought in equipment to remove asphalt and gravel from the road bed, while using caution during excavation in the confined space. Phil said he actually stood by the equipment, guiding Jeff so that no damage occurred to the surrounding trees. Now the former roadway is a water filled swale with trees in the nearby swamp woodland providing shade for the newly created habitat.

We resumed our walk, now on a newly constructed nature trail that winds through the swamp woodland to a point where it crosses the swale, parallels the swale, then links up with a newly constructed boardwalk at Carp Crossing. The swale is territory for a lone male Prothonotary Warbler who is calling without success for a mate. Prothonotary Warblers especially enjoy a habitat of silver maple and buttonbush so these species have been planted along the swale to make this habitat even more appealing.

Crossing the boardwalk, we enjoyed the luxuriant marsh vegetation at Carp Crossing. Because of drought conditions over the last few years, Big Creek Marsh water levels declined, exposing sections of the marsh floor that had been continually under water for years. These drought conditions allowed aquatic emergent plants to germinate, and the result is the lush marsh vegetation around the marsh perimeter, that we have been enjoying over the last few years. At the north end of the boardwalk, we crossed over to the park's long established nature trail which meanders in the northern part of the Conservation Area.

At the pond beside the nature trail, we looked for the Prothonotary Warblers which have claimed this territory. Prothonotary Warblers have successfully used this particular territory since 1994 as trees such as the nearby old willows have provided nesting cavities supplemented with nesting boxes, once it was recognized that Prothonotary Warblers would readily accept nesting boxes.

Funding for the Prothonotary Warbler habitat improvement at Holiday Beach Conservation Area was obtained from Environment Canada's Habitat Stewardship Program as well as a contribution of \$1,000.00 from Holiday Beach Migration Observatory.

Monitoring of the Prothonotary Warblers is on going at Holiday Beach Conservation by both Phil Roberts and Dean Ware. With proven success at Holiday Beach C.A., monitors eventually intend to extend their efforts to other parts of Big Creek Marsh which could be enhanced to provide suitable nesting habitat for nesting Prothonotary Warblers. Phil estimated that approximately one third of Canada's breeding population of Prothonotary Warblers are now found at Big Creek Marsh, thus it is appropriate to be looking at Big Creek Prothonotary Warbler habitat more closely.

We wish to extend our appreciation to Phil for guiding us through the Prothonotary Warbler habitat at Holiday Beach Conservation Area.

## Rowson's Bush Conservation Area

by Betty Learmouth

The first of Ojibway Nature Centre's 2003 series of walks to local nature hot spots was held on June 4, 2003 at Rowson's Bush Conservation Area on Big Creek from 6:00 p.m. to 8:40 p.m. Rowson's Bush Conservation Area is a property managed by the Lower Thames Conservation Authority as Big Creek is a tributary of the Thames River, placing Big Creek in that watershed.

Upon arriving at Rowson's Bush Conservation Area located east of Comber, naturalists Paul Pratt lead everyone back along the parking lot access road for a better view of the Conservation Area's expanse of grassland. We watched Bobolinks, at least four or five males and a single female, as they flew about the grassland, perching atop scattered shrubs. Through Paul's telescope we had excellent views of these birds, noting the female Bobolink has an entirely different appearance, a most attractive yellow-brown plumage. Other bird species viewed over or about the open grassland included Savannah Sparrow, Mourning Dove, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Downy Woodpecker, Eastern Wood-Pewee, Tree Swallow, Vesper Sparrow, Song Sparrow, and Northern Oriole. At the site of a former bridge crossing over Big Creek, we found Northern Flicker and Gray Catbird.

Returning to the Conservation Area's parking lot, we crossed a short boardwalk and entered Rowson's Bush, following a trail through the undulating flood plain terrain, noting swamp ponds in the hollows. A variety of tree species were observed including Shagbark Hickory, Shumard Oak, American Beech and Sugar Maple. Paul commented that this woodlot looked quite different from the Ojibway natural area due to the abundance of large Sugar Maples and the regeneration of this species in Rowson's Bush. We were intrigued to learn that bats will roost under the flaking bark of Shagbark Hickory.

Herbaceous plants observed in the rich woodland included the alien Moneywort, Trout Lily, Sharp-lobed Hepatica, White Trillium, Wild Geranium, Carrion Flower, Running Strawberry Bush (the hard fruit of this creeping shrub look like little strawberries), Wild Phlox, False Solomon's Seal, Garlic Mustard, Mayapple and Spotted Jewelweed.

Bird species heard or seen in the woodland included Great Crested Flycatcher, Blue Jay, Wood Thrush, and Red-eyed Vireo. Paul told us the best times to listen for Wood Thrush are just before sunrise and again in the evening.

The trail emerged from the woodland to a grassy area along the creek which provided good views of the woodland edge. Here we saw Downy Woodpecker, Eastern Wood-Pewee, Eastern Kingbirds and American Goldfinch. Paul commented that the tree species on the banks of Big Creeks included walnut, ash and elm. Returning to the parking lot, we observed Indigo Bunting, Eastern Wood-Pewee and House Wren.

Paul suggested that we should look for Eastern Meadowlark in the pasture field at the intersection of County Roads 46 and 35. Although our group appeared to be of considerable interest to a herd of Holstein cattle in the pasture, but we had no luck locating Eastern Meadowlarks. Our last two birds for the evening were a pair of Great Egrets flying overhead towards the northeast.

Between spotting the various bird species around us, Paul entertained us with tales from Paul and Tom Hince's latest birding adventure which had occurred two days previously on June 2, 2003 in the Province of Quebec. Paul and Tom journeyed to Quebec several days prior to their Big Day to do some scouting, then had conducted their first ever Quebec Big Day. The existing Quebec record for the most bird species seen in twenty-four hours was 158 species. Paul and Tom set a new Quebec Big Day record on June 2, 2003 of 166

species.

The twosome had chosen the Mont Tremblant area for their Big Day, a wonderful place for birding. The thrush chorus was outstanding, while wood warblers were in abundance. Of interest were the mammals encountered, including Beaver, Porcupine, and Red Squirrel. While scouting alone next to a thicket, Tom attracted a Timber Wolf while pishing. Paul thought they would never see a second wolf, but one did cross a road on their Big Day when they logged twenty hours to set a new Quebec Big Day record.

Thank you to Paul for organizing this evening excursion to enjoy the birds at Rowson's Bush.

Directions: To find Rowson's Bush Conservation Area, follow County Road 46 east from the City of Windsor to Comber. East of Comber look for County Road 37, turning right (south). At the cemetery at the next intersection, turn left onto the 7th Road. Rowson's Bush is located at the end of this road on the left side.

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## Heinz Bush Walk, June 8, 2003

by Betty Learmouth

On June 8, 2003 eight ECFNC members and friends met Ruth Junge for a walk through the Town of Leamington's Heinz Bush. Ruth and members of the Heinz Bush Committee have worked diligently over the past twelve years to preserve this remnant of our natural heritage in the Town of Leamington.

From our meeting place at the Roma Club we drove to Ecole Saint-Michel parking lot from which we could see the Heinz Bush to our left. Ruth told us the area directly in front of us had also been woodlot but that this 2.5 acre parcel had been purchased by the Essex County Separate School Board, some of which was lost to conversion of the land for playing fields. The remainder was left intact with the rest of the bush. Ruth acknowledged that unsuccessful attempts had been made to prevent the loss. Despite this disappointment, approximately four acres of the Heinz Bush are now preserved.

Ruth led us through the new entrance into the Heinz Bush, which is not the entrance that has been traditionally used over the years. The Town of Leamington has recently enhanced the trail network by placing fine gravel on the pathways which are popular and well used. We were delighted to see a variety of tree species and we were intrigued by the elderly Sugar Maples and the regeneration of this species occurring in the woodlot. As Ruth reminded us, the Sugar Maples were here well before the Town of Leamington existed.

In 1992, Gerry Waldron conducted a plant inventory for the Heinz Bush Committee, recording 24 tree species, 66 wildflower species and 19 shrubs and vines. As we toured the woodlot we found a variety of wildflowers including Mayapple, Wild Geranium, Jack-in-the-Pulpit, Bloodroot, Wild Onion, False Solomon's Seal, White Lettuce, Skunk Cabbage, Spotted Touch-Me-Not and shrub and vine species including Running Strawberry, Spicebush, Moonseed, Virginia Creeper, and Purple-Flowering Raspberry.

Along the northern edge of Heinz Bush, a stream flows through the ditch, its origin ground water from the neighboring lots. This stream disappears into an underground drain to the east. Seepage here encourages Skunk Cabbage to flourish on the ditch banks. From this vantage point, Ruth showed us the woodlot's noted Tulip Tree, thought to be the fourth largest in Essex County.

Unfortunately in this same area, we noted vandalism of small trees. Although graffiti has been a problem in the Heinz Bush, we did not find any during our visit.

Ruth then showed us the Heinz Bush western edge where a proposed trail will link the town centre to the Lake Erie shoreline and the Town of Leamington Marina. From this view point, we could again see the large Tulip Tree towering above all the other Heinz Bush trees.



On May 28, 2003, the Town of Leamington Council presented a plaque of appreciation to the members of the Heinz Bush Committee, acknowledging the efforts of these hard-working volunteers, including Bobby Clarke, Tom Hurst, Ruth Junge, and Mike Malone, who have all worked tirelessly to ensure the Heinz Bush would be preserved. Town of Leamington councillors are pleased that the Heinz Bush has been preserved and are most supportive of plans to include signage at the new entranceway as well as the continued maintenance of the trail system and monitoring of the woodlot.

Following our walk, Ruth provided a history of the efforts to preserve the Heinz Bush. When the threat to the Heinz Bush became known in March 1992, Ruth said a petition was circulated to determine the community interest regarding the Heinz Bush. Hundreds of names were gathered, and this petition was taken to the Town of Leamington council. Following that presentation, a meeting was held in the Heinz Bush to which the press was invited. That meeting was followed by another for the community at the nearby Ecole Saint-Michel. At that meeting neighbors to the woodlot indicated they were supportive of the Heinz Bush preservation.

Ruth said her Heinz Bush Committee realized that they must raise money, so they began to organize by approaching the various service clubs for support between March and August 1992. The ECFNC kick started the money raising with a pledge of \$4,000.00. At this time Ruth assumed the role of chairperson. Six months into the project Bobby Clark came on board to co-chair what was becoming a large undertaking. There were many meetings held to discuss the preservation of Heinz Bush. Activities such as a Heinz Bush contest in local schools were planned to raise the awareness of the need to preserve the Heinz Bush.

In September 1993, the Heinz Bush Committee was given a year by the Town of Leamington Council to raise \$100,000.00 towards the purchase of the property. A flyer was developed using information from Gerry Waldron's Heinz Bush plant inventory. A door to door canvas was planned by the Heinz Bush Committee. In order to ensure an organized and successful campaign, Ruth took off three weeks from her work to contact the canvassers and captains for this fund raising event. By Christmas 1993, \$13,000.00 had been raised through this door to door effort in the community.

On February 24, 1994 at the Essex Region Conservation Authority's Annual Meeting, The Friends of the Heinz Bush were recognized for their efforts to preserve the Heinz Bush with a presentation of the ERCA 1993 Environmental Achievement Award, accepted by Ruth on behalf of the group.

During 1994, the Heinz Bush Committee decided to publish and sell a fund raising lottery calendar, through the sponsorship of various Leamington businesses. Local artist Harold Burton drew a black and white illustration for the calendar, a scene from Heinz Bush depicting a pathway and the trees and plants along the pathway. As well, the Town of Leamington Council officially threw its support behind the efforts to preserve the Heinz Bush.

The sale of lottery calendars raised \$36,635.00. Committee member Tom Hurst constructed a wooden drum for the regular monthly draws held in the offices of the Leamington Chamber of Commerce. The secured drum was stored away each month between draws. Names of the lottery winners were published monthly in the Leamington Post. As well, encouraging events continued such as the fund raising at a local elementary school that raised \$700.00 for Heinz Bush preservation.

All fund raising combined raised a total of \$40,714.00. When this total was announced, Council indicated that the Heinz Bush Committee and its supporters had shown their intent in a visible manner. Council was happy with the fund raising efforts and pledged that every effort would be made to secure the Heinz Bush. Through the Essex County Field Naturalists' Club, the funds were invested in GICs with the monies accumulating to \$47,000.00 which was presented to the Town of Leamington Council at a ceremony in Fall 2002, marking the purchase of the Heinz Bush from its developer/owner.

As Ruth commented several times through the evening, the Heinz Bush is now in its twelfth year, its story still unfolding. During 2001, the Heinz Bush was included as part of the Communities in Bloom tour. In 2002, the Town of Leamington engaged a planner who designed a pathway network through the woodlot in consultation with the Heinz Bush Committee. Our walk generated more activity for Ruth as the exotic Garlic Mustard was found to have invaded the woodlot. Ruth would be contacting volunteers and the Town for bags and gloves needed to do a Garlic Mustard cleanup.

Our thanks to Ruth for leading us through the Heinz Bush while sharing so many memorable experiences that have occurred over the last twelve years.

Directions to the Heinz Bush: If you are proceeding east along Oak Street in Leamington, pass through the intersection with Erie Street, then look for the next intersection which is Wigle Street. Turn right onto Wigle Street, proceed one block, turn left on Maxon Avenue, follow the curve which becomes Sherman Street, continuing a short distance to Ecole Saint-Michel where you can park. A pathway leads away from the school driveway along the fence, eventually entering the Heinz Bush at an East entrance. Another way to enter the woodlot is to go past the Roma Club, park at the ball diamonds and walk to the West entrance.

Following the ECFNC excursion, Ruth organized a group of volunteers to remove Garlic Mustard from the Heinz Bush. On June 16, twenty-five students and six adults packed twenty-three very large garbage bags, then returned on June 17 to gather enough Garlic Mustard to fill a further twenty-one bags. High school students from Cardinal Carter, organized through teacher Paul George, arrived on June 30 to clean up along the stream. Ruth commented that she was very happy with the way all the effort and cleanups came together on very short notice.

### Tree Species

Manitoba Maple	Apple
Red Maple	White Mulberry
Silver Maple	Hop Hornbeam
Black Maple	Eastern Cottonwood
Sugar Maple	Black Cherry
Yellow Birch	Choke Cherry
American Hornbeam	White Oak
Hackberry	Bur Oak
Beech	Red Oak
White Ash	Sassafras
Red Ash	Basswood
Butternut	White Elm
Tulip Tree	Red Elm

## Wildflowers

Soft Agrimony	Common Horsetail	Hairy Solomon's Seal
Garlic Mustard	Trout Lily	White Lettuce
Wild Garlic	Wild Geranium	Jumpseed
Wild Leek	Herb Robert	Bloodroot
Great Ragweed	White Avens	Water Parsnip
Wood Anemone	Spring Avens	Carrion-Flower
Jack-in-the-Pulpit	Spotted Touch-Me-Not	Goldenrods
Asters	Michigan Lily	Wild Bean
Spring Cress	Butter-and-Eggs	Skunk Cabbage
Enchanter's Nightshade	False Solomon's Seal	Wake Robin
Spotted Cowbane	Wild Bergamot	White Trillium
Spring Beauty	Smooth Sweet Cicely	Slender Nettle
Hedge Bindweed	Ditch Stonecrop	Large-flowered Bellwort
Toothwort	Pokeweed	Mullein
Wild Yamroot	Mayapple	Downy Yellow Violet
Wild Cucumber		Wood Violet

## Shrubs and Vines

Rough-leaved Dogwood	Common Blackberry
Gray Dogwood	Wild Red Raspberry
Running Strawberry	Purple-flowering
Spicebush	Raspberry
Japanese Honeysuckle	Pussywillow
Moonseed	Sandbar Willow
Virginia Creeper	Elderberry
Poison Ivy	Bittersweet Nighshade
Wild Black Currant	Nannyberry
Multiflora Rose	Riverbank Grape

## Devon Woods Conservation Area

by Betty Learmouth

Ojibway Nature Centre's program of visits to Essex County nature hotspots continued at East Windsor's Devon Woods Conservation Area from 8:00 a.m. until 10:00 a.m. on June 10, 2003. While assembling for the morning's walk, participants were entertained in the parking lot by a Giant Swallowtail that kept circling the group, landing several times on Russ Munro's bright yellow straw hat.

An interpretive panel at the parking lot shows a network of trails within the Conservation Area as well as illustrations of various oak species that a visitor might expect to see here, including Bur, Chinquapin, Pin, Red, Shumard, Swamp White and White Oak. Leader Paul Pratt reviewed the shape of each leaf and the preferred habitat of each species. For instance, Pin Oak is the "water oak," its Latin name translating as "of marshes, swamps or wet places." Devon Woods is a wet site unlike portions of the Ojibway Prairie Complex which are dry, supporting Black Oak which prefers a dry site.

Just as we began our walk, sharp-eyed Shirley Grondin spotted a Common Garter Snake entwined on a fallen tree branch beside the trail, looking quite at home. Paul remarked that this snake appeared to have recently fed, perhaps on a small toad, as its scales were raised, revealing white tissue between the scales.

As we walked the Devon Wood C.A. trail in a counter clockwise direction, Paul drew our attention to the trees, shrubs and herbaceous plants along the trail. Paul removed a few leaves from a Spicebush, crushed them, and handed the leaves around for everyone to smell these aromatic leaves. At a thicket of Prickly Ash, Paul told us this shrub is not an ash, but a member of the Citrus Family and a larval food source for the Giant Swallowtail.

Since everyone is aware of the damage anticipated from the exotic pest, the Emerald Ash Borer, we paused to look at several ash trees that did not appear to be affected by the borer, displaying no D-shaped exit holes. The trees we examined appeared to be in good health.

There are various Ash tree species, two of which we looked at for identification purposes. Paul DesJardins showed us the White Ash compound leaf, composed of opposite leaflets attached by long petioles to the central stalk. We were able to contrast this compound leaf to that of the Green Ash which has short petioles attaching its leaflets to a central stalk. Paul Pratt remarked that Green Ash is a frequently planted ash in restoration sites around Essex County. In contrast to the ashes' compound leaves, tree species such as elms and oaks display a simple leaf, each leaf attached to a woody stem. It is important to recognize these leaf characteristics when attempting to identify trees, as Paul said looking at a single ash leaflet can certainly be a puzzle.

Due to recent rainy weather, a variety of mushrooms were observed. Paul Pratt told us the edible species, with the exception of morels, are more commonly found in fall.

Various shrubs and small trees caught our attention including Downy Arrowwood, High Bush Cranberry, Hop Hornbeam, Blue Beech and Bladdernut. The Blue Beech and Bladdernut displayed green fruit. Apparently the Hop Hornbeam fruit resemble hops, thus its name.

As we discussed various tree species, Paul Pratt pointed out the leaf and bark characteristics such as the huge leaves of the White Oak and the shaggy bark of the Shagbark Hickory which can provide a roost site for bats. Even a broken tree trunk can be used by wildlife such as by Turkey Vultures for a nesting site.

Along the trail we noted Poison Ivy, Spotted Touch-me-not or Jewelweed, Running Strawberry Bush (a relative of Bittersweet and a species found throughout the Carolinian Zone), Clustered Snake Root (a plant found in rich woods, its tiny yellow-green flowers blooming in mid June) and Sensitive Fern.

When Red-eyed Vireo were heard calling, Paul Pratt remarked that this species seems to sing throughout the day. Paul wondered how these birds ever get enough to eat as their song seems to occupy all their time. Other bird species heard included Great Crested Flycatcher and Black-capped Chickadee.

Thank you to Paul for an enjoyable and informative walk in the Devon Woods Conservation Area.

Directions: If you are proceed along Walker Road in the City of Windsor, at the intersection of Highway 42 (Division Road), turn to the right and follow Division Road as it curves, watching for the Devon Woods C.A. entrance.

## Fairplay Woods by Betty Learmouth

The third excursion offered by Ojibway Nature Centre to a local nature hotspot was held on the evening of June 18, 2003 at Fairplay Woods, a four hundred acre natural area recently expropriated by the Town of Tecumseh, ensuring the woodlot will be preserved. A retired concession road passes through the woodlot's centre, allowing easy access. Fairplay Woods is known locally as the "dragstrip woodlot." On this walk we were treated to a number of sightings ranging from breeding bird confirmation to colourful insects.

Naturalist Karen Cedar was our leader for the first portion of our walk, joined by Paul Pratt a little later. Shirley Grondin diligently recorded all the bird activity around us as this woodlot (except for the first 100 feet at the entrance) is part of Shirley's 10 kilometre by 10 kilometre breeding bird atlas square. Bird species recorded in the first few minutes included Blue Jay, Baltimore Oriole and a Gray Catbird that sang continually. Then Karen called excitedly that she had seen a Gray Catbird carrying a cicada, a sighting that confirmed Gray Catbird as a breeding bird in Shirley's square. If the bird has been foraging for itself it would have immediately consumed the cicada, rather than carrying the cicada to its young.

Bob Sanford asked about the showy rose bushes along the roadway, covered in numerous small white blossoms. Paul said that this rose species had been widely planted thirty years ago as a wild life shrub, but has now fallen out of favour. In certain areas, such as West Virginia, multiflora rose is considered a noxious weed.

Paul DesJardins reported that he and Fred Urie has walked in Fairplay Woods during the noon hour on June 17, 2003, reporting a Yellow-throated Vireo, three singing Wood Thrushes, a Rose-breasted Grosbeak and a Vesper Sparrow. The mention of the Wood Thrushes seemed to be a cue as we all heard a distant Wood Thrush singing and we were accompanied by the song of one or another Wood Thrush singing throughout our walk.

Paul Pratt stopped beside a large tree on our right and asked, "What is this tree?" No one said a word. Paul then proceeded to give us some clues. First Paul showed us leaves that were compound but not opposite, but instead were growing irregularly. Paul remarked that this tree species has a generic type of tree trunk. It simply does not stand out as there are no flaking plates, its leaves are not large, instead are fairly narrow and pointed. Paul suggested we examine the ground around us for last year's seed. Luckily we found some dark thin shells, and Paul told us we had found a Bitternut Hickory.

Karen called our attention to a small brown and yellow fly hovering about Paul's telescope. This species of hover fly has just one pair of wings. A closer look revealed a pair of stubby antennae. We watched as the fly checked the telescope's metal construction with its tongue.

A few minutes later, Paul pointed to a dragonfly above our heads, identifying this individual as a Swamp Darner, the largest dragonfly in Canada. We couldn't see any colour, but this species is colourful with blue eyes, a brown thorax with two green stripes, and wings with a touch of yellow. Swamp Darners breed in woodland ponds such as would be found in swamp forests where the voracious nymph feed on tadpoles. If this species somehow finds itself around a home, it will dart into a dark area such as a garage compared to most dragonflies that will head to open areas. A few minutes later we observed a Common Baskettail, a dragonfly of more common dimensions. We watched a female Emerald Spreadwing which Paul said can actually extract a bit of vegetation from a grass stalk and lay her egg. The hairs on her legs form a basket with which she may catch her prey.

Bird activity continued all about us. An Indigo Bunting sang from the top left hand of a tree so that its voice could carry, while through Paul's telescope we had a good view of another male Indigo Bunting. Two American Goldfinch perched on bare limbs. A Song Sparrow was observed carrying food. Both Downy and Hairy Woodpeckers were heard calling.

Paul identified the mosquitoes we noted around us to be *Aedes* species, a species that carries dog heart-worm, but is not a carrier of West Nile virus. The *Aedes* species breeds during early spring in puddles from snow melt. During summer, this species will lay eggs that may remain dormant up to six years. All eggs will hatch within a week if there is a good rainfall.

We were intrigued by a Six-spotted Tiger Beetle on the roadway which Paul told us will run across the ground, pounce on its prey which it will kill. These beetles have good vision, preferring open spaces where they stalk prey. For naturalists who are interested to learn more about these colourful beetles, Paul recommended the Tiger Beetles of Ontario website.

Paul drew our attention to a newly fledged young bird in a shrub beside the roadway. A closer look revealed a young Gray Catbird, still without its tail feathers. Adult Gray Catbirds were nearby, closely watching the young.

Upon reaching the parking area, we spoke with a volunteer with the Friends of Pike Creek, a group that has adopted this woodlot and who regularly collect and remove garbage from receptacles at Playfair Woods. Paul Pratt suggested that the concession road should be dubbed "Indigo Alley" in honour of this bird species which nest along the length of the retired concession road.

Directions: Fairplay Woods may be found by driving east past the Windsor Airport along County Road 42 from the intersection with Walker Road. After passing the intersection with Lauzon Parkway, watch for Danilo's Restaurant on the left, then prepare to turn right almost immediately onto the Eleventh Concession. Continue along the Eleventh Concession to the intersection with Baseline Road. At this intersection turn left and proceed to the parking at Fairplay Woods on your right.

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## **Carden Field Naturalists Host Cameron Ranch, Carden Plains Field Trip, June 21, 2003**

by Betty Learmouth

Carden Field Naturalists (CFN) members and friends enjoyed the CFN's inaugural field trip on June 21, 2003. Through the cooperative efforts of the CFN and the Couchiching Land Conservancy, two busloads of enthusiastic naturalists from around the Province (joined later by a contingent of Hamilton Field Naturalists) were treated to a tour of the Cameron Ranch, lead by CFN's President Bob Bowles and Couchiching Land Conservancy's Executive Director and CFN member Ron Reid. Transportation was by bus from the Carden Recreational Centre in Lake Dalrymple (located to the east of Orillia) to the Cameron Ranch.

Ron Reid provided field trip participants on his bus with some background information about the 2,898 acre Cameron Ranch, a remarkable property which has been an active ranch since the 1870's. Loggerhead Shrikes are drawn to this alvar habitat with its short grass and small scattered trees, grazed by 300 cattle for which the ranch vegetation provides a "good finish" for the animals. This property is four kilometers by four kilometres in size, surrounded by other ranches, the ranch edges being wetter while the central portion tends to be higher and drier.

In 2002 there were 28 pairs of Loggerhead Shrikes in Ontario on suitable habitat with three pairs or 10% of the Ontario population on this particular property. By contrast, in the 1970's the Ontario population of this endangered species was fifty pairs. Across eastern North America this species is in decline, along with other grassland species for which suitable habitat is reverting to forest or is being converted to other uses.

Ron told us the Carden limestone plain is flat with little soil over an underlying limestone bedrock, created 350,000,00 million years ago from a tropical sea. The area has been glaciated frequently, with the overburden of soil repeatedly scrapped. Glacial melt has left granite glacial erratics scattered about the terrain. In spring the Carden Plain is wet but by July the Carden Plain is very dry which results in trees dying, hence the tree skeletons on the plain.

Our first stop was just inside the ranch entrance on well grazed land with a few scattered shrubs and trees. Some participants were fortunate to glimpse a Loggerhead Shrike perched in its territory before it vanished from view. Ron told us many of the plants around us were exotics such as Viper's Bugloss, introduced as a result of cattle grazing.

Boarding the bus again, we lurched slowly across the limestone plain along the ranch track. Ron pointed out rusty pieces of metal that had been placed over cracks in the limestone to prevent the cattle from injury. Eventually the buses stopped at the edge of an alvar shrubland where we observed a number of alvar plant species. As Ron stated, the alvar shrubland is truly a haven for alvar bird species as well as supporting an array of insect species.

Ron showed us a number of the alvar shrub species including Fragrant Sumac and Shrubby Cinquefoil, many of which looked gnarled and "chewed over," an indication of their age. Other shrubs included Gray Dogwood, Downy Arrowwood and various rose species. We were told alvar habitat is for the hardy such as hawthorns which can survive the summer drought.

Walking along the alvar shrubland track, we found a number of plants, including Hairy Beard Tongue, Carolina Cranesbill, Early Saxifrage, Prairie Smoke, Field Chickweed, Goatsbeard, Harebell, an Anemone species, Rock Sandwort, Wild Bergamot, Balsam Ragwort, Tall Cinquefoil, and Lesser Stitchwort. The Prairie Smoke was in profusion and very showy, but it was the plant's seed head we were admiring, the flower being less conspicuous. Several Carden Field Naturalists mentioned that three weeks earlier Field Chickweed had been in bloom, producing a remarkable carpet of white blossoms across the Carden Plain.

Alvar shrubland provides habitat for a variety of bird species. We heard or saw Turkey Vulture, Northern Harrier, Black-billed Cuckoo, Ruby-throated Hummingbird, Alder Flycatcher, Eastern Kingbird, Brown Thrasher, Cedar Waxwing, Yellow Warbler, Eastern Towhee, and Clay-coloured Sparrow. Due to the stunted nature of the alvar shrubs, we had good views of many of these species even at a distance with the aid of Bob Bowles' telecope. As we observed Black-billed Cuckoo, Bob told us this species can regenerate the lining of its stomach if spines of the caterpillars on which this species feed damage the stomach's lining.

Field trip participants were delighted to have had this opportunity to view the Cameron Ranch. Many thanks to the Carden Field Naturalists members who organized and led the trip as well as arranging for the delicious lunch at the Carden Recreation Centre following the excursion.

#### References:

- Bowles, R. L. *A Checklist of the Flora for Carden Plains Alvar, Carden Township, Victoria County, May, 1996.*  
Bowles, R. L. *Field Checklist of the Birds of Carden Township, September, 1998.*

## **An Excursion to Royal Astronomical Society of Canada's New Essex County Observation Site** by Betty Learmouth

Five ECFNC members joined astronomer Randy Groundwater at the Royal Astronomical Society of Canada's (RASC) new viewing site near Comber on the evening of June 28, 2003. Prior to any sky viewing, Randy provided some information concerning the RCAS's activities in our area over the past twenty years. The dome observatory now located in Comber was acquired in 1973 by a faculty member of St. Clair Community College and St. Clair Community College's President, Dr. Quittenton. These two men had been out West where they had seen an observatory which greatly impressed them. Upon returning to Windsor, they ordered a prefab dome and a Celestron 8 telescope for the St. Clair observatory which opened in early 1973 at a location by the college fountain. Subsequently, students in electrical engineering classes were treated to views of sun spots.

Randy came to the observatory in 1977 when he attended meetings of the RASC meetings on the St. Clair Community College campus. By the late 1970s and early 1980s, light pollution had affected the night sky at St. Clair. From 1984 through 1994, Randy taught astronomy courses twice yearly at St. Clair, using the observatory for moon and planet viewing, demonstrating the interest in the community for this area of knowledge.

A lunar eclipse in late August 1989 drew 500 to 600 persons to the observatory but sadly this was the last event at St. Clair for which the observatory was open. Randy's classes continued to draw interested persons, including Gail Ainslie of Cottam who invited Randy to "the ranch," Gail's family's rural property near Cottam which has perhaps the least light pollution in Essex County.

In 2001, St. Clair Community College indicated its desire to expand and expressed a wish to relocate the observatory. The RASC paid a nominal fee of a few hundred dollars for the observatory, then formed a committee to consider the future of the observatory. The Ainslie family kindly offered their rural property as a leased site for the observatory, while the Town of Lakeshore approved the property's rezoning. The RASC was fortunate to build a support room adjacent to the dome quite reasonably.

Plans for the site include the construction of a 540 square foot deck which was anticipated to be completed within two weeks of our visit. This deck will provide a way to manage groups through efficient traffic flow as visitors move from the support room into the observatory and then onto the deck. Future plans involve the construction of an eighty or ninety seat amphitheatre adjacent to the dome.

In the support room, we noticed a photo display of various light standards which had been prepared by a RASC member. Randy told us that the cobra light standard with its 175 watt light is a light waster compared to the box-shaped light standard. One hundred percent of light from the box-shaped light standard is directed downward, contrasted to the cobra head that directs 50 to 60 percent of its light outward where it is wasted, as well as causing an annoying glare. A dramatic example showing the contrast between these two light standard designs is found on Todd Lane in LaSalle where the two light standards are intermingled.

Randy stated light pollution is a huge issue. Presently Dan Taylor is working with the County of Essex and the Province to install light standards that are efficient. The flat lense type standard has been installed at the Highway 401 truck weigh station as well as at each major intersection on the Essex by-pass. Unfortunately, in the neighborhoods of 7,500 newly constructed homes in the City of Windsor and surrounding suburbs, such as St. Clair Beach, the old style cobra light standard has been installed.



Randy urged us to look at light standards at night, to observe the good and the bad in our community.

Next we moved from the support room into the dome. Randy told us that someone will arrive early on a viewing night to open the dome to release the warm air, ensuring the temperature in the dome is similar to the outside temperature. If the dome and the outside temperature differ, the image in the telescope will swim. The present telescope is a Celestron 8, a popular and portable telescope that is reasonably priced. Through a grant from The Ontario Trillium Foundation, the RASC will be able to purchase a state of the art telescope and mount which looks like the Celestron 8 but has a 14 inch diameter lense and is three times longer than the Celestron 8. The new telescope, due in October / November 2003, with its accompanying software and computer, will enable projection onto a hanging screen for amphitheatre audiences.

RASC members are anticipating that a number of school groups and other groups such as Scouts will want to take part in future programs at the site. In the present school curriculum, Grades 6 and 9 both have entire units on astronomy which would create a ready audience for the RASC site.

Randy demonstrated to us how the dome moved and opened. We were pleased to see stars (early evening cloud cover had disappeared) and watch as a several satellites moved in and out of view. We ventured outside to enjoy an orientation, starting by facing north and locating the North Star or Polaris. We looked at various constellations and specific stars. After this orientation, we returned to the dome where we each had a view through the Celestron 8 telescope of the ring nebula and M13, a star cluster some 23,000 light years from Earth.

The plans for the Royal Astronomical Society of Canada's new site are very exciting and a welcome addition to our community's resources. A sincere thank you to Randy for a wonderful evening and we look forward to returning soon.

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## **Rare tree surfaces in Lambton: The first of its kind in Canada**

By George Mathewson

from "*The Observer*," Sarnia, Tuesday, June 24, 2003

Gerry Waldron was exploring the Bickford Woods south of Sarnia last November when he began treading on some large, unfamiliar leaves.

He picked them up, considered the nearly bare branches above.

Bingo.

Waldron had found a swamp cottonwood, a first not only for Lambton County but a tree previously unknown in Canada. For an arborist that's like scoring the winning Stanley Cup goal or scaling Mount Everest.

"It was a beauty," he recalled. "I'd been on the hunt for 15 years and here it was. The others urged caution but I was dancing around."

On Friday, Waldron returned to the Bickford Woods to continue a scientific inventory of its plant life. Tagging along was a team from *The Observer* and Anton Reznicek, curator of the University of Michigan herbarium.

The swamp cottonwood is a tree native to the southern U.S. and often found growing beside cypress, a tree more common to alligators than beaver.

"We always knew it was a possibility for Canada but only as a longshot," Reznicek said. "It's rare even in Michigan where there are only four or five known sites."

Reaching Canada's lone stand of swamp cottonwoods required a one-kilometre hike through thick swarms of mosquitoes and an ankle-deep swamp.

Finally, Waldron led us to the clearing. Rising from a single massive root system were at least 63 of the rare trees. The largest is about 85 feet (26 metres in height).

Lambton County's swamp cottonwoods are 130 kilometres from the nearest known trees in Michigan and likely arrived north on the winds as seed fluff.

They could have arrived 80 years ago, or 5,000 years ago. Whatever the case, there's a reason they've avoided detection until now, Waldron said.

"People don't like to go into cottonwood swamps. You know you'r going to get your feet wet."

Waldron is a consulting ecologist with 30 years of field experience and degrees in botany and horticulture from the University of Guelph.

He lives on an Amherstburg area farm where his book notes, "he takes wistful pleasure in replacing the rocks and trees so arduously removed by his pioneer ancestors."

Located 25 kilometres south of Sarnia, the Bickford Woods was the county's largest privately-owned forest until it was recently purchased by the Nature Conservancy of Canada.

The woods are home to many of the 73 species of trees in the Carolinian Zone, the lush growing region below a line from Grand Bend to Toronto.

Its undisturbed interior attracts wood thrush, rose-breasted grosbeak, and other birds that can't or won't nest in smaller, scattered woodlots.

And with hundreds of spring pools, Bickford is a vital breeding ground for reptiles and a last refuge for threatened species like the eastern fox snake.

As he continues his plant inventory, Waldron hopes to find even more species previously unknown to Canada.

"Lambton has got secrets," he said. "This spot is one of them."

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## New Publications

Waldron, Gerry. *Trees of the Carolinian Forest*. Erin, ON: Boston Mills Press, 2003. \$24.95 (ISBN 1-55046-404-3)

At the summer meeting of the ECFNC held at Holiday Beach Conservation Area on July 9, 2003, ECFNC member Gerry Waldron discussed his newly published book *Trees of the Carolinian Forest*, and his book's publishing history from the completion of the text in 1996 to its printing in May 2003. A "Stop the Presses!" cry was issued in November 2002 with the author's discovery of a new tree species for Canada. The exciting moments of this discovery may be read on page 152 of this fine book which should be on the book shelves of every naturalist in the Carolinian Zone. The book is available from the author and at fine book stores everywhere.

*Pelee Island: human and natural history; guide to a unique island community*. Wilds of Pelee Island Outdoor Centre for Conservation, July 2003. \$12.00 (ISBN 0-9733101-0-3)

This new publication, which has been beautifully produced under Ben Porchuk's guidance, includes nearly fifty pages of text composed by Ron Tiessen and is accompanied by over 150 coloured photographs. This fine book is available at the Pelee Island Heritage Centre, nature book stores and Chapters Books.

**Shaughnessy Cohen Memorial Savannah Update**

by Betty Learmouth

The Ontario Trillium Foundation kindly provided the Essex County Field Naturalists' Club with a generous grant of \$16,500.00 for various activities connected with Pelee Island's Shaughnessy Cohen Memorial Savannah which is owned by the Nature Conservancy of Canada and is under the stewardship of the Essex County Field Naturalists' Club. Funding was provided for a full plant inventory and the writing of a management plan which is presently being prepared by Consulting Ecologist Gerry Waldron and Botanist John Ambrose with the assistance of Peggy Hurst and Lindsay Rodger.

As well, volunteer birders Randy Horvath, JoAnn Grondin, Shirley Grondin and Betty Learmouth conducted three breeding bird surveys and butterfly counts on the property in June 2003.

Funding was provided for development of a pamphlet entitled *Walk Pelee* which suggests easy walks on Pelee Island's natural areas while providing some information about each area. The useful and long out-of-print Federation of Ontario Naturalists Stone Road Nature Reserve pamphlet was reprinted. Both pamphlets are available at the Pelee Island Heritage Centre and have been well received by Island visitors.

A compact disk audio program for self-guided walks on the Stone Road Alvar Complex was produced with Ron Tiessen providing the text for this hour-long program which is also available at the Pelee Island Heritage Centre.

As well, funding provided for a series of nature walks during both August 2002 and 2003. Following are some highlights from the 2003 walks.

**August 1, 2003**

An American Snout butterfly landed on Rik Warron's (Beavercreek, OH) hat rim which was subsequently netted by Rik's daughters, Victoria and Mercedes. Mercedes and Victoria found a small American Toad on Stone Road, while a Wolf Spider was seen a little later. We had a good view of a Question Mark on Rough-leaved Dogwood. A single tiny Giant Swallowtail larvae was found on a Hop-tree. We visited the butterfly garden on the schoolhouse property for good looks at Hackberry Butterflies and Summer Azures.

**August 2, 2003**

Since this was the annual butterfly count on Pelee Island, we kept a tally of butterflies seen on both the morning and afternoon walk. In the morning, we saw four tiny Giant Swallowtail larvae on Hop-tree leaves which were recorded as part of the butterfly count.

Another sighting was a larva of a moth called the Large Maple Spanworm which is gray-brown and mimics a twig in both colour and posture. This larva has many food plants, favouring maple and oak, but we saw it on Hop-tree leaves which we were examining for Giant Swallowtail larvae. We actually thought the larva was a tiny piece of tree debris caught on the edge of a Hop-tree leaf until, that is, the debris moved and we saw its legs and the looping movement that is characteristic of this larva. This is a common moth species across North America.

During the afternoon walk, we were fortunate to see a Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, a male Indigo Bunting, and a male Orchard Oriole in the Blue Ash / Chinquapin Oak / Nodding Wild Onion savannah on the Federation of Ontario Naturalists' (FON) Nature Reserve.

A provincially rare plant species, the Whorled Milkweed, has commenced to bloom on the FON Nature

Reserve.

## August 3, 2003

The morning walk featured large numbers of Summer Azure butterflies as these small blue butterflies sampled the minerals in the damp soil on Stone Road. Several Giant Swallowtails, an Eastern Tiger Swallowtail and a Hackberry butterfly were seen, as well as a single Giant Swallowtail larva on a Hop-tree.

A light rain shortly after 11:00 a.m. enhanced the golden colour of numerous Gray-headed Coneflower ray blossoms which are blooming at their peak on the FON Nature Reserve, possibly producing the best floral display of this plant species since 1997. (MNR District Ecologist Allen Woodliffe reports the summer of 2000 had a fine floral bloom following the fall burn of 1999). Nodding Wild Onion is also to be seen, but is growing in only a few locations unlike the summer of 1997 when it was in bloom across the grassland alvar. Conobea, a provincially rare plant species, is growing in profusion on the alvar pavement by the FON trail, unlike last summer when only a few tiny Conobea were seen at this location. Several plants of Marsh Yellow-cress are also growing along side the Conobea on the alvar pavement.

## August 4, 2003

Today butterflies were the focus on each walk. A single Giant Swallowtail larva on a small Hop-tree was seen by both groups. At this site is a single plant of Yellow Horse Gentian displaying its orange tomato-like fruit. Of interest were the two species of Daddy-long-legs seen together on Rough-leaved Dogwood. Possibly these two species are Brown and Eastern Daddy-long-legs.

## August 5, 2003

Walk participants enjoyed the numerous butterflies along Stone Road as well as the floral display on the grassland alvar of the Federation of Ontario Naturalists Nature Reserve.

## August 6, 2003

Walk participants at about 10:30 a.m. were treated to views of a Snowberry Clearwing, a hawk moth about the size of a bumblebee, which this moth resembles in both its colouring and its behaviour. This moth, a day flier, was nectaring at Wild Bergamot, a plant that is attractive to many insects, but not resting on the flowers as would be expected if the insect were a bee. Its antennae were noted to be much larger than those of a bumblebee, another field mark of the Snowberry Clearwing.

A second plant of Yellow Horse Gentian was found on the morning walk as well as two plants of the native loosestrife, Winged Loosestrife.

## August 7, 2003

A number of Daddy-long-legs were noted at the Rough-leaved Dogwood on the S. Cohen Memorial Savannah. At the schoolhouse, Carol Vincent (Oregon, OH) drew our attention to a group of Hackberry/Tawny Emperors, perhaps 10 – 12 individuals, in pursuit of another larger and darker butterfly. On the FON Nature Reserve we saw a group of beetles on Prickly Ash, as well as a single Black-capped Chickadee at the end of the FON trail.

As we began the afternoon walk, a Dog Day Cicada stridulated briefly producing the high pitched sound we associate with hot days in August. Under Common Hackberry leaves we found three green Snowy Tree Crickets hiding from predators. On the FON alvar savannah we watched a pair of copulating Monarchs. A large dark bee caught our attention, then disappeared into an opening that appeared to have been excavated in a post that supports an interpretive sign in the second savanna. This was likely a carpenter bee. Walking back on the Stone Road to our vehicles from the FON trail, we saw three American Snout Butterflies, two Tiger Swallowtails, a "flock" of Summer Azures and a Giant Swallowtail.

## August 8, 2003

On the afternoon walk, we found a Snowy Tree Cricket underneath a Hackberry Leaf on the FON property. A few minutes later we had a fleeting glimpse of the Snowberry Clearwing on the edge of the S. Cohen property before the moth flew off along Stone Road. On the FON Nature Reserve, we watched a pair of Giant Swallowtails whirl above us along with another unidentified individual. A Morning Cloak butterfly was observed hanging upside down on a dead limb of a hawthorn. Another individual was seen resting on damp Stone Road soil along with the "flock" of Summer Azures.

This evening we had a walk with 12 Scouts and their leaders from Akron, OH, everyone enjoying the coolness of the alvar after an afternoon spent swimming.

## August 9, 2003

This morning we found a group of gray/white leafhoppers clinging to a hackberry limb on the FON property just at the edge of the woodland. When we reached out to them they simply sidled away from us, putting the limb between us and them. We didn't locate the Giant Swallowtail larva on this walk

Our first sighting on this walk was a Great Spangled Fritillary by the S. Cohen monument. We had a tantalizing glimpse of another clearwing moth, this one with orange on its abdomen and more scaling on the wing. It was nectaring on the popular clump of Wild Bergamot on the S. Cohen property. We relocated the Giant Swallowtail larva on the right side of the Hoptree where we have been watching it this past week. On the FON grassland we watched a pair of copulating Monarchs, acting very much like the pair we saw earlier, resting on leaves, then flying a short distance.

## August 10, 2003

This morning we looked at Daddy-long-legs and Snowy Tree Crickets in the Rough-leaved Dogwood at the S. Cohen Memorial Savannah and we were fortunate to find two katydids, one of which was the True Katydid. They were perched on the upper surface of dogwood leaves and had no inclination to move.

On the FON property near the end of the new trail section a Common Garter Snake moved off the trail at our approach.

## August 11, 2003

No walk participants today.

## August 12, 2003

Overcast skies today with the sun breaking through just before noon hour. Today the Rough-leaved Dogwood yielded a grass-green grasshopper with a reddish-brown back, resembling the twigs on the dogwood. There was one Snowy Tree Cricket and several gray leafhoppers that sidled away from us.

We had good looks at a Giant Swallowtail nectaring on Wild Bergamot near the Hop-tree where we find the Giant Swallowtail larva which had grown noticeably today, its head swelling and both the dark and light areas on its body changing in colour. A green leafhopper was on the Hop-tree as well. A Giant Swallowtail nectared on Nodding Wild Onion on the last section of the pathway.

There were several moth sightings, one of a Gypsy Moth laying eggs and another of a large gray moth that proved to be a sphinx moth species. Its mottled gray wings matched the bark of the tree on which it had alighted. Its body was large with markings that gave it the appearance of possibly the Waved Sphinx Moth. Eventually it flew down the road and disappeared into the roadside vegetation.

## August 13, 2003

The morning walk provided some excellent looks at insects. We found a Walkingstick under the Rough-leaved Dogwood, then two more smaller individuals. After some searching we located a Snowy Tree Cricket and the gray leafhoppers. At the exposed limestone section, we found a Hummingbird Clearwing moth perched on a rock. We were unable to locate the Giant Swallowtail larva but had good looks at Giant Swallowtails nectaring along with an Anglewing and Red-spotted Purple. A single Green and Red Leafhopper was on a Hoptree. A Progressive Bee Fly was seen for a moment.

On the FON property we saw a pair of Eastern Kingbirds, then overhead we spotted a pair of Red-tailed Hawks. Giant Swallowtails were seen nectaring on Swamp Milkweed and Nodding Wild Onion as well as a Hummingbird Clearwing which was observed on Nodding Wild Onion.

### August 14, 2003

Driving across East West Road at 10:10 a.m., a garter snake crossed the road near the Curry Road intersection. On the morning walk, Hannah Haserodt (North Olmsted, OH) netted Red-spotted Purple, a Giant Swallowtail and two Hackberry Butterflies for good close looks.

The afternoon walk was warm as the temperature was headed to 31 degrees Celsius. Arriving back at the PIHC, we found the power was out.

### August 15, 2003

Power returned to Pelee at 8:10 a.m. The walk was a few minutes late getting underway due to a thunder storm which left our plants much refreshed after nearly two weeks without rain. We located the Giant Swallowtail which has grown and taken on a greenish hue and has even developed "eyes."

Birds seen included Eastern Kingbirds on the alvar grassland, and along the South Shore Road we saw a Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Indigo Buntings, and Northern Flicker, and an American Kestrel on Stewart Road.

### August 16, 2003

Another and closer look during the morning walk at the thought-to-be Giant Swallowtail larva revealed it to be an Eastern Tiger Swallowtail larva which had become quite green. We did locate a tiny larva which we hope to be able to follow as it grows. A tiny larva on the Swamp Milkweed needs identification.

During the afternoon walk, we found a Praying Mantis at the Yellow Horse-gentian on Stone Road, followed by very good looks at a Hummingbird Clearwing which was seen twice, at the Wild Bergamot on the roadside at Shaughnessy Cohen Memorial Savannah and again by the lane to the schoolhouse as it examined Arlene Sievus' cycling helmet. The tiny larva on the Swamp Milkweed appears to be a Monarch larva.

A heavy downpour interrupted this walk at 3:30 p.m. which resumed and finished at 4:30 p.m.

### August 17, 2003

No walk participants today.

### August 18, 2003

A fine morning with sightings of the Snowy Tree Cricket, gray and green leafhoppers (10 of this species together along the stem of a Solomon's Seal), and a Northern Walkingstick. Several Giant Swallowtail about including one which laid an egg, allowing us to examine it. The storm had blown all the orange tomatoes off the Yellow Horse Gentian. No Summer Azures were seen and only two Red-spotted Purples.

### August 19, 2003

Another fine morning with the Dog Day Cicadas stridulating in the background. Cienna Porchuk was our only walk participant today in the morning as we searched for insects. We found bumblebees, a tussock moth caterpillar, Daddy-long-legs, gray leafhoppers, a green leafhopper, 3 Snowy Tree Crickets, a True Katydid that eluded us by flying off, and a Northern Walkingstick. At the schoolhouse butterfly garden and surrounding area, we watched Giant Swallowtails, Eastern Tiger Swallowtails, Hackberry butterflies, Red-spotted Purple

and Cabbage Whites. We also found a small green Praying Mantis in the schoolhouse butterfly garden.

During the afternoon walk we enjoyed many Giant Swallowtail butterflies, including several whirling together. Morgan Didion of Sandusky, OH found an adult Praying Mantis on the Rough-leaved Dogwood.

August 20, 2003

With temperatures again headed upwards, six walk participants enjoyed hearing the Dog Day Cicada and Yellow-billed Cuckoo at the corner of East West and Stone Road in mid morning. Four katydids were highlights of the walk including one that was beige-coloured. (Allan Woodliffe has mentioned seeing both pink and yellow individuals). Also located were Green and Grey Leafhoppers and an Assassin Bug as well as the Eastern Tiger Swallowtail larva which appears to be on a bed of silk strands. On the grassland alvar, Eastern Kingbirds appeared to be coming together into a flock. Several American Goldfinch were seen around Gray-headed Coneflowers.

August 21, 2003

Today temperatures were again soaring with a smog alert and a humidex hitting 38 degrees with the Dog Day Cicada stridulating loudly. During the morning walk, a tiny larva was found on the small Hop-tree. We headed off-trail for a short walk along the FON firebreak to observe more alvar pavement and to see the Black-eyed Susans which were in full bloom. Butterfly numbers appear down, although several Giant Swallowtails are still about and we found one Clouded Sulphur on Stone Road.

August 22, 2003

The afternoon walk featured a katydid species, gray and green leafhoppers, wasps in the construction material, and a good number of both Giant Swallowtail and Red-spotted Purple butterflies. The Butterfly-weed has set green pods. American Goldfinch and Eastern Kingbird and a single Yellow Warbler were seen on the open grassland.

August 23, 2003

The afternoon walk with the Wild Ones (a native plant society with chapters in Oakland and Ann Arbor, MI) yielded some excellent sightings of katydids including a True Katydid, several Walkingsticks, a large Praying Mantis, Daddy-long-legs, Snowy Tree Cricket, Dog Day Cicada (stridulating), two sightings of Black-and-yellow Argiopes, a Goldenrod Spider, the Tiger Swallowtail larva, and possibly a tiny Giant Swallowtail larva. Some off-trail walks were included on this walk including a foray into the S. Cohen property to view the Elm-leaved Goldenrod, and three newly discovered Yellow Horse Gentian with fruit attached. We viewed the savannah area on the dry ridge across from the schoolhouse and a second alvar pavement off-trail on the FON property.

August 24, 2003

A beautiful morning with low humidity. The morning walk featured a good look at a yellow True Katydid as well as a number of Giant Swallowtails, some of which were quite worn. One Common Sulphur was seen as well as one worn Black Swallowtail. The Gray-headed Coneflowers are well past their best as the golden hue has vanished from the alvar grassland. We went off trail to see both the Elm-leaved Goldenrod and the Yellow Horse Gentian and we discovered another robust plant near the alvar pavement on the FON Nature Reserve. Good numbers of Whorled Milkweed in bloom.

August 25, 2003

Another fine morning with the temperature to rise to 30 degrees Celsius. During our walk we heard the Yellow-billed Cuckoo call five times. Giant Swallowtails, Red-spotted Purples, Tawny Emperors and Hackberry Butterflies were all flying today up and down Stone Road with good numbers of Giant Swallowtails and a few Monarchs on the FON Nature Reserve. At least twelve Common Wood Nymph were seen towards the end of the

FON trail, perhaps a late summer brood. One Eastern Tailed Blue was found on Stone Road.

Sharp-eyed Gabriel Church of Ypsilanti, MI found a small Eastern Garter Snake coiled on a dead dogwood branch in the tiny woodland that we pass through on the FON Nature Reserve.

## August 26, 2003

Following a storm that toppled some large trees on Pelee Island, visitors found plants refreshed on Stone Road. Some observations were a Katydid with tiny drops of rain still clinging to its wings and body, Snowy Tree Crickets, a brown Northern Walkingstick, a large slug on a small Common Hackberry trunk, an egg and larva of the Giant Swallowtail, several Giant Swallowtails nectaring on Nodding Wild Onion, and several Common Wood Nymph.

## August 27, 2003

Another storm overnight further refreshed our woodland and the alvar communities. A good sighting on the morning walk was a Yellow-billed Cuckoo resting on a tree branch just over Stone Road near the East West Road. Other sightings were True Katydid, leafhoppers, Snowy Tree Cricket, mudpuddling Giant Swallowtails, a Giant Swallowtail larva on the leaf of a small Hop-tree, three Eastern Tailed Blues, several Hackberry butterflies, an American Snout butterfly, Common Wood Nymph butterflies, and several Eastern Tiger Swallowtails.

At 11:45 a.m. on the grassland alvar, we looked overhead at three Osprey soaring, then watched as they set their wings to glide southward and out of sight. The Osprey were followed southward by a Great Blue Heron. Other bird species on the alvar grassland were Eastern Kingbird, Cedar Waxwing and a warbler species.

## August 28, 2003

During the afternoon walk, we noted nectaring Giant Swallowtails at the Rough Woodland Sunflowers on the FON trail, with the number of Giant Swallowtails down from a few days ago. We saw several Red-spotted Purples, Northern Crescents, and a single Red Admiral, all mudpuddling near the entrance to the FON trail. We caught a brief glimpse of a Katydid in flight in the FON woodland. On the Elm-leaved Goldenrod we found a handsome Goldenrod Spider and an Ambush Bug. The floral bloom of Gray-headed Coneflower has ended with the Nodding Wild Onion beginning to fade as these plants set their seed.

## August 29, 2003

Today Mr. Bill Hill, a life long Pelee Island resident who was born in 1924, was able to provide some details about a barn foundation found on the Shaughnessy Cohen Memorial Savannah. Information about the foundation had been requested by Gerry Waldron and Lindsay Rodger had expressed interest to learn how the property may have appeared in the past. Mr. Hill said this barn belonged to Albert Glenn who came to Pelee Island as a young man and who was in the cattle business. There were stalls in the barn but Mr. Hill did not know how many cows Mr. Glenn had. Mr. Glenn's son Bobby was in the business of shipping cream.

Quite a bit south of the barn, there was a peach orchard owned by Mr. Hal Schafer who owned the Clubhouse which is today known as the Tin Goose Inn. A large plow was brought to Pelee Island and the orchard was broken up, and the land was provided to Mr. Hill for farming by Mr. Schafer. Mr. Hill commented that the area was "a lot more open in those past days." At this time, during the 1940s, Mr. Hill said that he could see from his home on Stone Road (1,100 feet north of the lake on what is now the ERCA property) across to the Clubhouse. In the 1940s, most of the area was bush but prior to that time had been pasture land and had occasionally been burned.

## August 31, 2003

Today's walk participants enjoyed watching Giant Swallowtails nectaring on the Rough Woodland Sunflowers as well as finding two "fresh" Red Admirals. Several Great Crested Flycatchers were noted on the FON property.



## **ECFNC Activities and Excursions, September 2003 through November 2003**

For further information concerning the ECFNC excursions, contact Bert Harris (966-3263), JoAnn Grondin (734-0056), Margaret Jennings (250-0705), or Betty Learnmouth (944-0825). "Thank you" to everyone who has volunteered to lead an excursion. We appreciate leaders sharing their time and expertise with others. Let us know about your ideas for upcoming excursions. Consider volunteering as an excursion leader

September 1 – Holiday Beach Migration Observatory – Day 1 of the 30<sup>th</sup> season of Fall hawk watching at Holiday Beach Conservation Area. Daily hawkwatching continues through November 30.

Sept through November – Ojibway Nature Centre - Captivating Critters (Ages 3-5) - Wildlife exploration and nature fun for the younger set. The first day of the class for September and October (September 15 and October 20) are one hour introductory classes for parents and children. Please note there will be no class on Thanksgiving Monday, October 13. September 15, 22, 30, October 6; October 20, 27, November 3, 10; November 17, 24, December 1, 8; Mondays 10:00 am - 12:00 p.m. or 1:00 - 3:00 p.m. \$24.00 for 4 weeks

September 3 – 28 – Point Pelee National Park – Monarchs and more hikes, Wednesday to Sunday.

Sept 3 - Ojibway Nature Centre - Weekday Warblers - Eliminate the confusion of fall warblers with this field trip at the peak of warbler migration. Wednesday, 8:30 a.m. \$10/trip

Sept 4 – Ojibway Nature Centre - Advanced Birding - Warbler Workshop. A serious birder's delight! An in depth workshop to eliminate the confusion of all warblers. Refreshments provided. Thursday 6:30 - 8:30 p.m. at the Centre \$13

Sept 6 – Ojibway Nature Centre - Fall Bird Migration - A series of six field trips to observe the incredible variety of bird life which migrates through Essex County. Register for the entire course and receive a discount. September 6, 20, October 5 (Sunday), 18, November 22, December 6 Saturday (morning field trips) except October 5 (Sunday). \$13 per week

Sept 6 – Point Pelee National Park – W.E. Saunders Birding Odyssey – Call PPNP for more details

Sept 10 – ECFNC Members Monthly Meeting – Guest speaker ERCA Biologist Dan Lebedydk will discuss invasive wetland species including phragmites and purple loosestrife and others. Meet at the Essex Civic Centre at 7:30 p.m. in the Cafeteria on the first floor.

September 13 – Ojibway Nature Centre - Native Plant and Tree Sale - Attract wildlife to your yard with flowers, trees and shrubs. Saturday 10:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

September 13/14 – Festival of Hawks at Holiday Beach Conservation Area – Sharp-shinned Hawk Weekend, Monarchs and Hummingbirds, 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. - Enjoy a weekend of activities including guided hawk watching from the hawk tower, banding demonstrations and talks about both raptors and passerines, and live raptor displays. There will be hands-on children's activities, slide presentations including hawk identification, an art display and environmental displays. Bob Pettit will present a hawk identification workshop on September 13, 2003 at 1:30 p.m. in the Education Building. Pelee Wings Nature Store's display will feature sales of binoculars, guide books, clothing and nature photography. Light refreshments will be served at the Blue Kestrel Café. ECFNC members are invited to volunteer to assist at the hands-on children's display, the display area including the ECFNC display, and the Blue Kestrel Cafe.

September 14 – ECFNC Fall Excursion – Join Richard and Cathie Smith for a visit to their 32 acre property in the Town of Essex which the Smith's call "Dragonfly Downs." Richard and Cathie have owned their property for ten years, undertaking restoration projects including pond construction, tree plantings and a prairie meadow. The Smith's address is 6965 Sixth Concession of the Town of Essex (the former Colchester South Township) From Essex at the Highway 3 By-Pass take the Arner Townline, County Road 23, south and watch for Sixth Concession on your right. Turn right (heading west) and watch for the second house from the Arner Townline on your left. Meet in the late afternoon at 4:00 p.m.

Sept 20 – Ojibway Nature Centre - Fall Bird Migration - A series of six field trips to observe the incredible variety of bird life which migrates through Essex County. October 5 (Sunday), October 18, November 22, December 6 Saturday (morning field trips) except October 5 (Sunday). \$13 per week

September 20/21 – Festival of Hawks at Holiday Beach Conservation Area – Broad-winged Hawk Weekend and Dragonflies, 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Enjoy a weekend of activities including guided hawk watching from the hawk tower, banding demonstrations and talks about both raptors and passerines, and live raptor display. Hands-on children's activities, slide presentations including hawk identification, an art display and environmental displays will be featured. Pelee Wings Nature Store will provide a display and sale of binoculars, guide books, clothing and nature photography. Light refreshments will be available at the Blue Kestrel Café. Bob Pettit will present a hawk identification workshop on September 20, 2003 at 1:30 p.m. in the Education Building. Paul Pratt will lead a fall dragonfly migration walk at 10:00 a.m. on Sunday, September 21, 2003. ECFNC members are invited to volunteer to assist at the hands on children's display, the display area including the ECFNC display and the Blue Kestrel Cafe.

Sept 20 – 21 – Ontario Field Ornithologists Annual Convention – Birds of Point Pelee – Saturday, September 20 features birding and butterfly field trips followed by an evening banquet at the Roma Club. Guest speaker Ethan Meleg will present a light-hearted and passionate look at the pursuit of bird photography, illustrated by Ethan's stunning photos. More field trips are scheduled for Sunday. Registration is \$45.00 which includes the banquet, program and field trips. To register, mail your registration made payable to the Ontario Field Ornithologists (include name, address, phone, e-mail) to Chris Escott, 1 Shouldice Court, Toronto, ON M2L 2S3

Sept 21 – ECFNC Fall Excursion – Join Dave Kraus for a walk on his Essex County property. This walk is scheduled for earlier in the fall than last year's walk. Dave has an approximately 2 acre wetland/pond, about 13 acres of diverse reforested/shrubs/wildflowers area, an approximately .5 acre newly planted native tallgrass prairie, a 5 acre diverse, mature woodlot, wide wooded fence rows, numerous nesting structures for Eastern Bluebirds, Tree Swallows, House Wrens, and Eastern Screech Owls. There are also usually many hawks flying over/hunting over the reforested area in the fall. Directions: Hwy 77 north from Leamington (or south from Windsor/401), turn east (toward Wheatley) on Mersea Rd. 7 (Concession 7), drive about 3 km to stop sign at Mersea Road 12, continue east along Road 7 about 1.5 km. Dave's property is the goldenrod fields on the north side. The driveway (for parking) is across from house number 1518. There is a NHRP sign and an ERCA sign with Dave's name on it in the fields on either side of the driveway. Meet in the late afternoon at 4:00 p.m.

Sept 24 – ECFNC Executive meeting

September 27 - Festival of Hawks at Holiday Beach Conservation Area – Peregrine Falcon Day and Fall Song-

birds, 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. - Enjoy a day of activities including guided hawk watching from the hawk tower, banding demonstrations and talks about both raptors and passerines, and live raptor displays. Hands-on children's activities, slide presentations including hawk identification, an art display and environmental displays will be featured. Pelee Wings Nature Store's display will include sales of binoculars, guide books, clothing and nature photography. Bob Pettit will present a hawk identification workshop in the Education Building. Light refreshments at the Blue Kestrel Café. ECFNC members are invited to volunteer to assist at the hands-on children's display, the display area including the ECFNC display and the Blue Kestrel Cafe. (Note that Sunday, September 28 is a Memorial Forest day. Due to traffic congestion we will have full activities on Saturday with reduced activities on Sunday i.e, no banding demonstrations).

Sept 28 – Ojibway Nature Centre - Fall Colour Hikes - All ages will enjoy our spectacular fall colours on these guided hikes at Ojibway. October 5, 19, 26, November 2 Sundays 2:30 - 3:30 p.m. \$3/person

Sept 28 – Ojibway Nature Centre - Reach Out to Wildlife - Discover fascinating facts about our local wildlife. "Endangered Spaces" will be the theme of today's walk. Upcoming walks: October 19 - Endangered Species; November 2 - Backyard Visitors; Sundays 1:30 - 2:30 p.m. \$3/person

Sunday, October 5 - Ojibway Nature Centre - Fall Bird Migration - A series of six field trips to observe the incredible variety of bird life which migrates through Essex County. October 18, November 22, December 6. \$13 per week.

Oct 5 - Ojibway Nature Centre - Fall Colour Hikes - All ages will enjoy our spectacular fall colours on these guided hikes at Ojibway. October 19, 26, November 2, Sundays 2:30 - 3:30 p.m. \$3/person

October 8 - ECFNC Members Monthly Meeting – Our guest speaker will be Point Pelee National Park Interpreter Sarah Rupert who provide us with a special Point Pelee National Park presentation. Meet at the Essex Civic Centre at 7:30 p.m. in Room C.

Oct 13 - Ojibway Fall Colour Festival - Join us Thanksgiving Day for nature walks, environmental exhibits and activities the whole family will enjoy. We will also have a special nature and bird art show and sale.

October 13 (Thanksgiving) Monday 12:00 - 4:00 p.m. Free admission to the Centre.

Wednesday, October 15 - -- Forest Restoration Tour: Pits and Mounds; the missing link in restoring Carolinian forests, lead by Mathis Natvik. Meet at 14738 McDonald Line in the Municipality of Chatham-Kent, park on grass just off road side. From Windsor take Highway 401 to Exit #117 (Highgate). Go south on Orford-Bury Road off the exit, straight at the stop sign in Highgate. Continue 5 km. south of Highgate to McDonald Line, turn left (east), proceed 1 km to 14738 McDonald Line on right (south). Please call or fax to register: (519)-678-3866 or fax (519)-678-3291. Time: 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

October 18 – Ojibway Nature Centre - Fall Bird Migration - A series of six field trips to observe the incredible variety of bird life which migrates through Essex County. November 22, December 6 - Saturday (morning field trips). \$13 per week

Oct 19 - Ojibway Nature Centre - Reach Out to Wildlife - Discover fascinating facts about our local wildlife. "Endangered Species" will be the theme of today's walk. Upcoming walk: November 2 - Backyard Visitors; Sundays 1:30 - 2:30 p.m. \$3/person

Oct 19 - -- Ojibway Nature Centre - Fall Colour Hikes - All ages will enjoy our spectacular fall colours on

these guided hikes at Ojibway. October 19, 26, November 2, Sundays 2:30 - 3:30 p.m. \$3/person

Oct 26 – Ojibway Nature Centre - Fall Colour Hikes - All ages will enjoy our spectacular fall colours on these guided hikes at Ojibway. November 2, Sundays 2:30 - 3:30 p.m. \$3/person

Nov 2 - Ojibway Nature Centre - Reach Out to Wildlife - Discover fascinating facts about our local wildlife. "Backyard Visitors" will be the theme of today's walk. Sundays 1:30 - 2:30 p.m. \$3/person

Nov 2 -- Ojibway Nature Centre - Fall Colour Hikes - All ages will enjoy our spectacular fall colours on these guided hikes at Ojibway. Sundays 2:30 - 3:30 p.m. \$3/person

**November 8** – ECFNC Annual Dinner – Guest speaker will be Canadian Wildlife Service Research Biologist Chip Weseloh who will speak about his research in Lake Erie's Western Basin and the Detroit River. Chip has been studying populations of colonial nesting bird species such as Double-crested Cormorants, Herring Gulls and Ring-billed Gulls for over thirty years in the region as well as conducting toxicology studies. Mark your calendar for this event booked for the recently renovated Windsor Manor Club, 1140 Goyeau Street, Windsor, ON. Doors open at 6:00 p.m. and dinner is at 7:00 p.m. Donations to the fund raising silent auction are welcome. Tickets will be available at ECFNC meetings, Ojibway Nature Centre and Pelee Wings.

Nov 16 – ECFNC Fall Activity - Cleanup on the Greenway – This cleanup will be third of three that the ECFNC has agreed to do during 2003 as part of our adoption of Greenway section. ECFNC's secretary JoAnn Grondin is the organizer for these outings to our ECFNC section of the Greenway which extends from the Town of Harrow east to the McCormick Sideroad. We will meet in Harrow at 2:00 p.m. where Walker Road crosses the Greenway just by Colio Wines.

November 22 - Ojibway Nature Centre - Fall Bird Migration - A series of six field trips to observe the incredible variety of bird life which migrates through Essex County. December 6 Saturday (morning field trips). \$13 per week

Nov 23 - ECFNC Fall Activity – Recently the Town of Tecumseh has expropriated Fairplay Woods, a four hundred acre woodland which has a retired concession road passing through the woodlot that allows easy access. Enjoy a leisurely walk in this woodland while we search for wintering birds. There is no designated leader as we will all contribute. Directions: Drive east past the Windsor Airport along County Road 42 past Danilo's Restaurant on the left, then prepare to turn almost immediately right onto the Eleventh Concession. Continue along the Eleventh Concession to the intersection with Baseline Road. At this intersection turn left and proceed to the parking at Fairplay Woods on your right. Meet at 2:00 p.m.

Nov 30 - ECFNC Fall Activity - Enjoy a walk in the Zuliani Woods which was donated to the Essex Region Conservation Authority by the Zuliani family. Our guide will be Larry Onysko whom we will meet in the parking lot of the Roman Catholic Church in McGregor at 2:00 p.m.

December 6 – Ojibway Nature Centre - Fall Bird Migration – The last of a series of six field trips to observe the incredible variety of bird life which migrates through Essex County. Saturday (morning field trip) \$13 per week

December 10 – ECFNC Members Meeting – Members night – Share a selection of your favourite slides or donate Christmas baking for the social time following the meeting. Meet at the Civic Centre in Room C at 7:30

p.m.

December 15 – Point Pelee National Park Christmas Bird Count (needs to be confirmed)

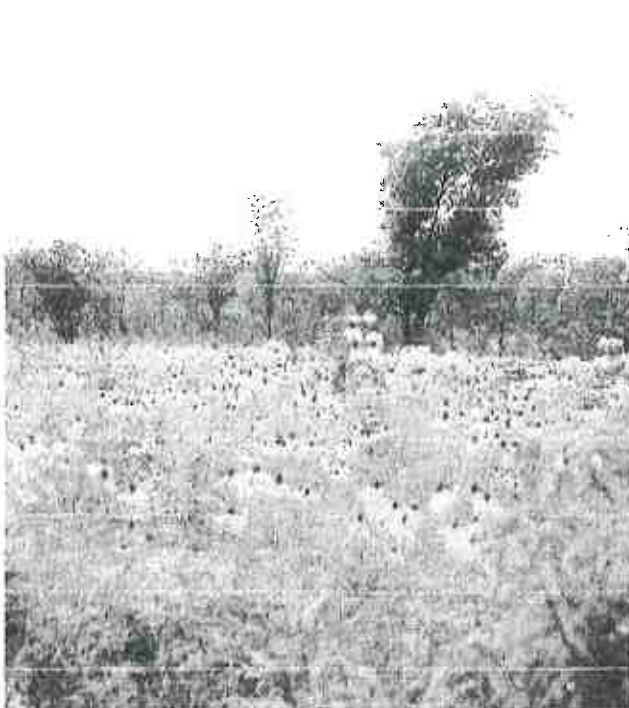
December 20 – Cedar Creek Christmas Bird Count

December 21 – Rondeau Provincial Park Christmas Bird Count

December 27 – Rockwood/Amherstburg Christmas Bird Count

December 28 – Lake St. Clair/North Shore Christmas Bird Count (needs to be confirmed)

January 1, 2004 – Detroit River Christmas Bird Count



Above: Gray-headed Coneflower as seen on the Ontario Federation of Naturalists Stone Road Nature Reserve during early August 2003.



Right: Nodding Wild Onion as seen on the Ontario Federation of Naturalists Stone Road Nature Reserve during early August 2003.

## **NHRP Equipment**

**Donna Sale**

As most of you know NHRP is disbanding because no one has volunteered to coordinate the seed collection. NHRP has accumulated many items related to collecting and seed processing over many successful years. These items will be auctioned at the annual dinner in November.

Some of these items are too large to bring to the dinner, but a photo will be there. A list of the items follows. Anyone wishing to see a large item, indicated by #, or if you have any questions, you can contact Donna Sale at 733-9972. If you want an item, but can't attend the dinner, find a friend to bid for you. Some NHRP items will be retained by the club including the fax machine, display board, and cash box.

# Scale mechanical beam with both pound and kilo weights, up to 100 pounds

Electronic scale both ounces and grams up to 2000 grams

# Bar fridge - outside dimensions: ht. 830 cm, width 470 cm, depth 490 cm

Waring blender with heavy duty Blades which have been filed to dull them slightly

Small blender - Westinghouse Filed blades, 7 speeds

Sieves set of 4 with a catch pan, 8" diameter for very small seeds

Sieve - 16" diameter, with 2 mesh inserts for larger seeds

# Truck dolly can change handle angle to create a 4 wheel flat bed

# Orchard ladder - tripod style ladder